
Manner: ACCIDENT

The Medical Examiner certified 542 deaths as non-traffic accidents for the calendar year 2004. The largest group of accidental deaths was those who died as a result of a fall, 39% (213/542). Of the 213 deaths attributed to injury sustained in falls, 80% (171/213) occurred in the age group 70 years and over. A large percentage of these falls were ground-level falls in elderly individuals, which resulted in fractures leading to complications such as pneumonia.

The second largest group of non-traffic accidental deaths was individuals who died as a result of accidental overdoses of drugs and/or poisons, representing 39% (211/542). By age, the largest percentage of these accidental drug deaths, 29% (62/211), occurred among adults between 40-49 years. The second largest group, 28% (59/211), included adults between the ages of 50-59. Nineteen percent (41/211) were adults between 30-39 years of age. Four accidental drug deaths were between the ages of 13-19 years and one accidental drug death occurred in an infant under one year of age.

The 2004 drug rate number (211) represents a 25% increase compared to the 159 accidental drug deaths in 2003. A more detailed discussion of these deaths is presented in the section "Death Due to Drugs and Poisons."

Twenty-four (24) deaths resulted from fire or thermal injury, an increase from 19 in 2003 and 22 in 2002. Of the 24 fire-related deaths, 21% (5/24) were the result of accidents that occurred outside of King County. The injured were transported to Harborview Medical Center's Burn Intensive Care Unit where they died.

Another category of accidental deaths worthy of comment is death resulting from drowning. There were 17 drowning deaths in 2004, a substantial decrease compared to 27 drowning deaths in 2003, 32 in 2002, and 35 in 2001.

A comment is necessary to clarify the cause of death listed as "aspiration." This type of death results from a person choking on a foreign object, often a bolus of food while eating. In 2004 there were eight (8) deaths due to aspiration of a foreign body compared to nine (9) in 2003, and five (5) in both 2002 and 2001.

Of the 542 accidental deaths in 2004, 19% (102/542) were the result of incidents which occurred outside of King County, but the death took place within King County. These deaths were the result of the injured being transported from outside King County to medical facilities within King County where they died. Since these deaths occurred in King County, they come under the jurisdiction of the King County Medical Examiner.

Graph 3-1 Circumstances of Accidental Death / King County Medical Examiner / 2004

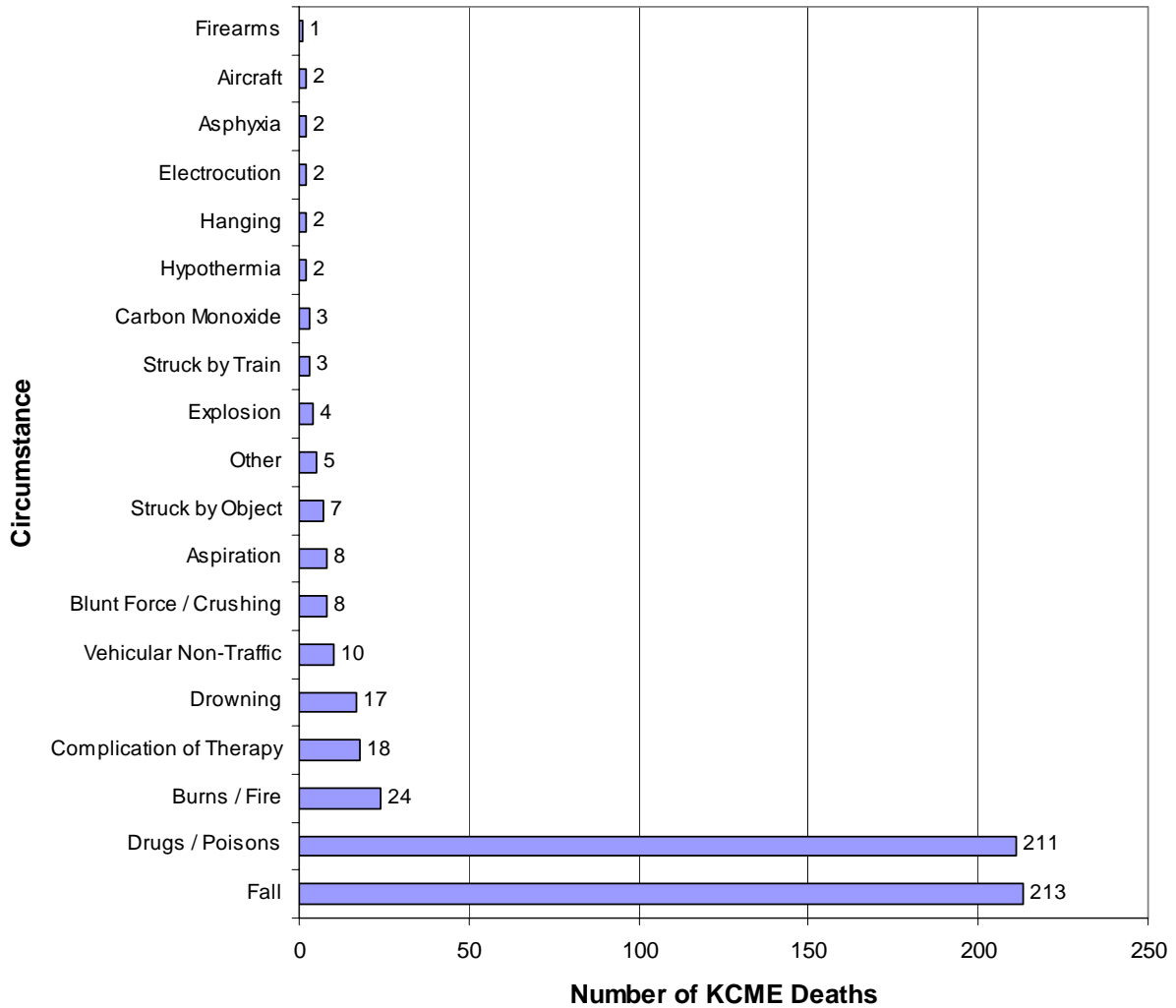


Table 3-1 Circumstances of Accidental Death / Race / Sex / KCME / 2004

CIRCUMSTANCES / SEX	RACE					SUB TOTAL	TOTAL
	WHITE	BLACK	ASIAN	NATIVE AMERICAN	OTHE R		
Aircraft	2	0	0	0	0		2
<i>Male</i>	2	0	0	0	0	2	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Asphyxia (compress/positional/mechanical)	2	0	0	0	0		2
<i>Male</i>	1	0	0	0	0	1	
<i>Female</i>	1	0	0	0	0	1	
Aspiration	7	0	1	0	0		8
<i>Male</i>	5	0	0	0	0	5	
<i>Female</i>	2	0	1	0	0	3	
Blunt Force / Crushing	7	1	0	0	0		8
<i>Male</i>	5	1	0	0	0	6	
<i>Female</i>	2	0	0	0	0	2	
Burns / Fire	19	4	0	1	0		24
<i>Male</i>	12	2	0	0	0	14	
<i>Female</i>	7	2	0	1	0	10	
Carbon Monoxide	3	0	0	0	0		3
<i>Male</i>	1	0	0	0	0	1	
<i>Female</i>	2	0	0	0	0	2	
Complication of Therapy	17	0	1	0	0		18
<i>Male</i>	11	0	0	0	0	11	
<i>Female</i>	6	0	1	0	0	7	
Drowning	10	3	4	0	0		17
<i>Male</i>	8	2	0	0	0	10	
<i>Female</i>	2	1	4	0	0	7	
Drugs / Poisons	174	27	2	6	2		211
<i>Male</i>	123	21	2	4	2	152	
<i>Female</i>	51	6	0	2	0	59	
Electrocution	2	0	0	0	0		2
<i>Male</i>	2	0	0	0	0	2	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Explosion	4	0	0	0	0		4
<i>Male</i>	3	0	0	0	0	3	
<i>Female</i>	1	0	0	0	0	1	
Fall	197	4	11	1	0		213
<i>Male</i>	101	1	5	1	0	108	
<i>Female</i>	96	3	6	0	0	105	

Table 3-1 Circumstances of Accidental Death / Race / Sex / KCME / 2004 (continued)

CIRCUMSTANCES / SEX	RACE					SUB TOTAL	TOTAL
	WHITE	BLACK	ASIAN	NATIVE AMERICAN	OTHE R		
Firearms	1	0	0	0	0		1
<i>Male</i>	1	0	0	0	0	1	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Hanging	2	0	0	0	0		2
<i>Male</i>	2	0	0	0	0	2	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Hypothermia	1	1	0	0	0		2
<i>Male</i>	1	1	0	0	0	2	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Struck by Object	6	0	1	0	0		7
<i>Male</i>	6	0	1	0	0	7	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Struck by Train	3	0	0	0	0		3
<i>Male</i>	2	0	0	0	0	2	
<i>Female</i>	1	0	0	0	0	1	
Vehicular Non-Traffic	9	0	1	0	0		10
<i>Male</i>	9	0	0	0	0	9	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	1	0	0	1	
Other	3	2	0	0	0		5
<i>Male</i>	2	1	0	0	0	3	
<i>Female</i>	1	1	0	0	0	2	
Totals	469	42	21	8	2		542
Percent	86%	8%	4%	1.5%	0.5%		100%

Graph 3-2 Accidental Deaths / Race / King County Medical Examiner / 2004

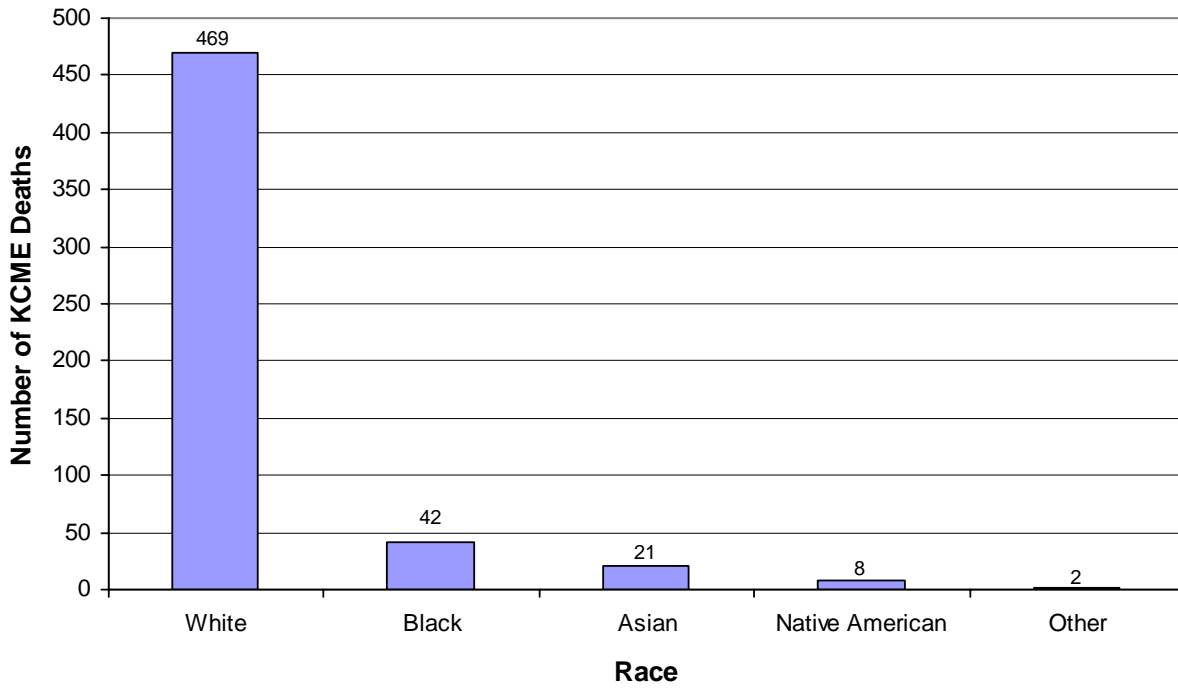


Table 3-2 Circumstances of Accidental Death / Age / Sex / KCME / 2004

CIRCUMSTANCES / SEX	AGE GROUP (YEARS)													SUB TOTAL	TOTAL
	< 1	1 to 5	6 to 12	13 to 15	16 to 19	20 to 29	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 59	60 to 69	70 to 79	80 to 89	90 +		
Aircraft	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Asphyxia (compress/positional/mech)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
<i>Male</i>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Aspiration	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	3	3	0	8	8
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	5	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	3	
Blunt Force / Crushing	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	3	2	0	0	8	8
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	6	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	
Burns / Fire	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	4	5	4	3	4	0	24	24
<i>Male</i>	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	0	14	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	2	1	1	0	10	
Carbon Monoxide	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	3	3
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	
Complication of Therapy	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	4	2	7	1	0	18	18
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	2	3	1	0	11	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	4	0	0	7	
Drowning	0	0	1	1	0	2	3	1	1	2	4	2	0	17	17
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	1	0	2	3	0	1	0	3	0	0	10	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	2	0	7	
Drugs / Poisons	1	0	0	1	3	28	41	62	59	14	2	0	0	211	211
<i>Male</i>	1	0	0	1	3	24	30	42	40	10	1	0	0	151	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	4	11	20	19	4	1	0	0	59	
Electrocution	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	2
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Explosion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	4	4
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	
Fall	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	7	15	15	45	86	40	213	213
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	4	6	8	27	44	14	107	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	9	7	18	42	26	106	

Table 3-2 Circumstances of Accidental Death / Age / Sex / KCME / 2004 (continued)

Circumstance / Sex	AGE GROUP (YEARS)													SUB TOTAL	TOTAL
	< 1	1 to 5	6 to 12	13 to 15	16 to 19	20 to 29	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 59	60 to 69	70 to 79	80 to 89	90 +		
Firearms	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Hanging	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	
<i>Male</i>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Hypothermia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Struck by Object	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	7	
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	7	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Struck by Train	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Vehicular Non-Traffic	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	10	
<i>Male</i>	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	1	1	0	2	1	0	9	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	
Other	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	5	
<i>Male</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	3	
<i>Female</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	
Totals	1	4	2	3	9	39	52	86	91	47	69	98	41	542	
Percent	0.2	0.7	0.4	0.6	1.6	7.2	9.6	15.9	16.8	8.7	12.7	18	7.6	100%	

Graph 3-3 Accidental Deaths / Age Group / King County Medical Examiner / 2004

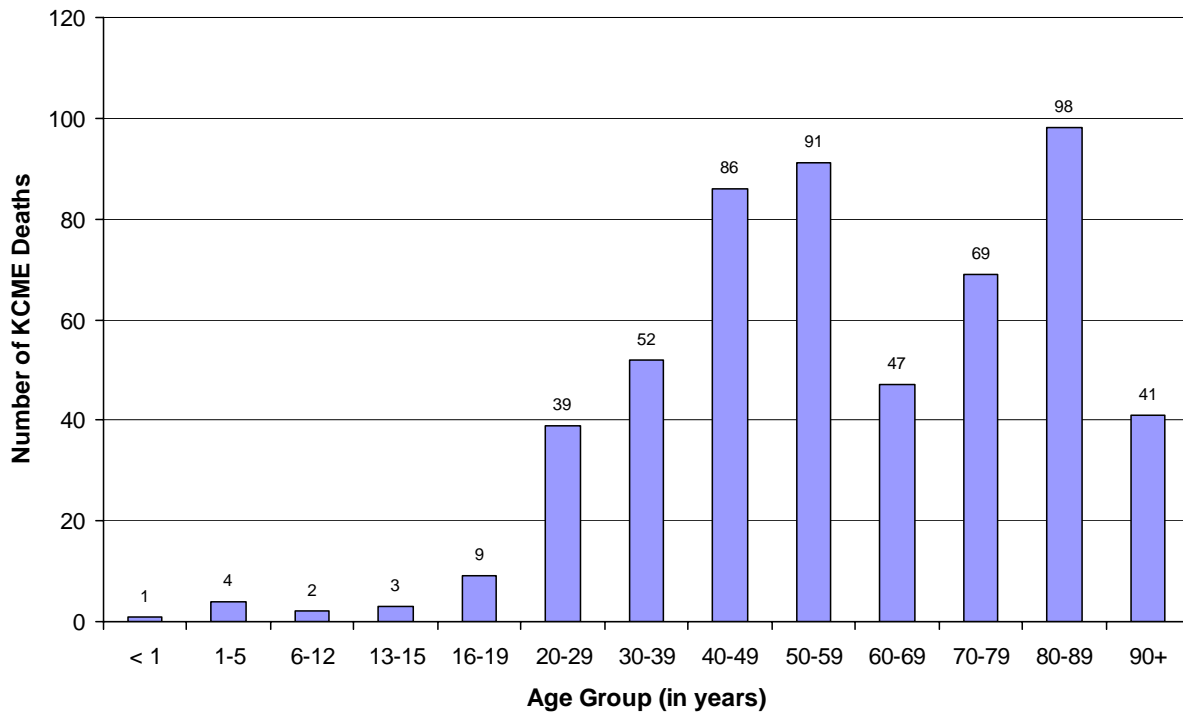


Table 3-3 Circumstances of Accidental Death / Sex / KCME / 2004

CIRCUMSTANCES	SEX		TOTAL
	MALE	FEMALE	
Aircraft	2	0	2
Asphyxia (compressional / positional / mechanical)	1	1	2
Aspiration	5	3	8
Blunt Force / Crushing	6	2	8
Burns / Fire	14	10	24
Carbon Monoxide	1	2	3
Complication of Therapy	11	7	18
Drowning	10	7	17
Drugs / Poisons	152	59	211
Electrocution	2	0	2
Explosion	3	1	4
Fall	108	105	213
Firearms	1	0	1
Hanging	2	0	2
Hypothermia	2	0	2
Struck by Object	7	0	7
Struck by Train	2	1	3
Vehicular Non-Traffic	9	1	10
Other	3	2	5
Totals	341	201	542
Percent	63%	37%	100%

Table 3-4 Circumstances of Accidental Death / Blood Alcohol Results / KCME / 2004

CIRCUMSTANCES	TESTED		NOT TESTED	TOTAL
	TESTED POSITIVE	TESTED NEGATIVE		
Aircraft	0	2	0	2
Asphyxia (compressional/ positional / mechanical)	0	2	0	2
Aspiration	2	0	6	8
Blunt Force / Crushing	0	6	2	8
Burns / Fire	4	10	10	24
Carbon Monoxide	3	0	0	3
Complication of Therapy	0	8	10	18
Drowning	4	12	1	17
Drugs / Poisons	71	123	17	211
Electrocution	0	0	2	2
Explosion	0	2	2	4
Fall	12	41	160	213
Firearms	0	1	0	1
Hanging	1	1	0	2
Hypothermia	0	1	1	2
Struck by Object	0	7	0	7
Struck by Train	1	2	0	3
Vehicular Non-Traffic	2	4	4	10
Other	1	3	1	5
Totals	101	225	216	542
Percent	19%	41%	40%	100%